MARVEL

017

GILLEN
SPURRIER
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ROSENBERG

STAR WARS™

DOCTOR APHRA

REMASTERED
Part IV

It is a time of instability in the galaxy as rebel forces battle the Galactic Empire for freedom. But instability can lead to opportunity for those with the know-how and lack of scruples to let them take advantage of it.

Rogue archaeologist and scoundrel Doctor Chelli Aphra would typically be one such individual. Unfortunately, she's been blackmailed into the servitude of the psychotic droid crime lord Triple-Zero – most recently to steal his old memories from the Tarkin Initiative.

However, in order to do so, Aphra has had to come up with her most daring plan yet....

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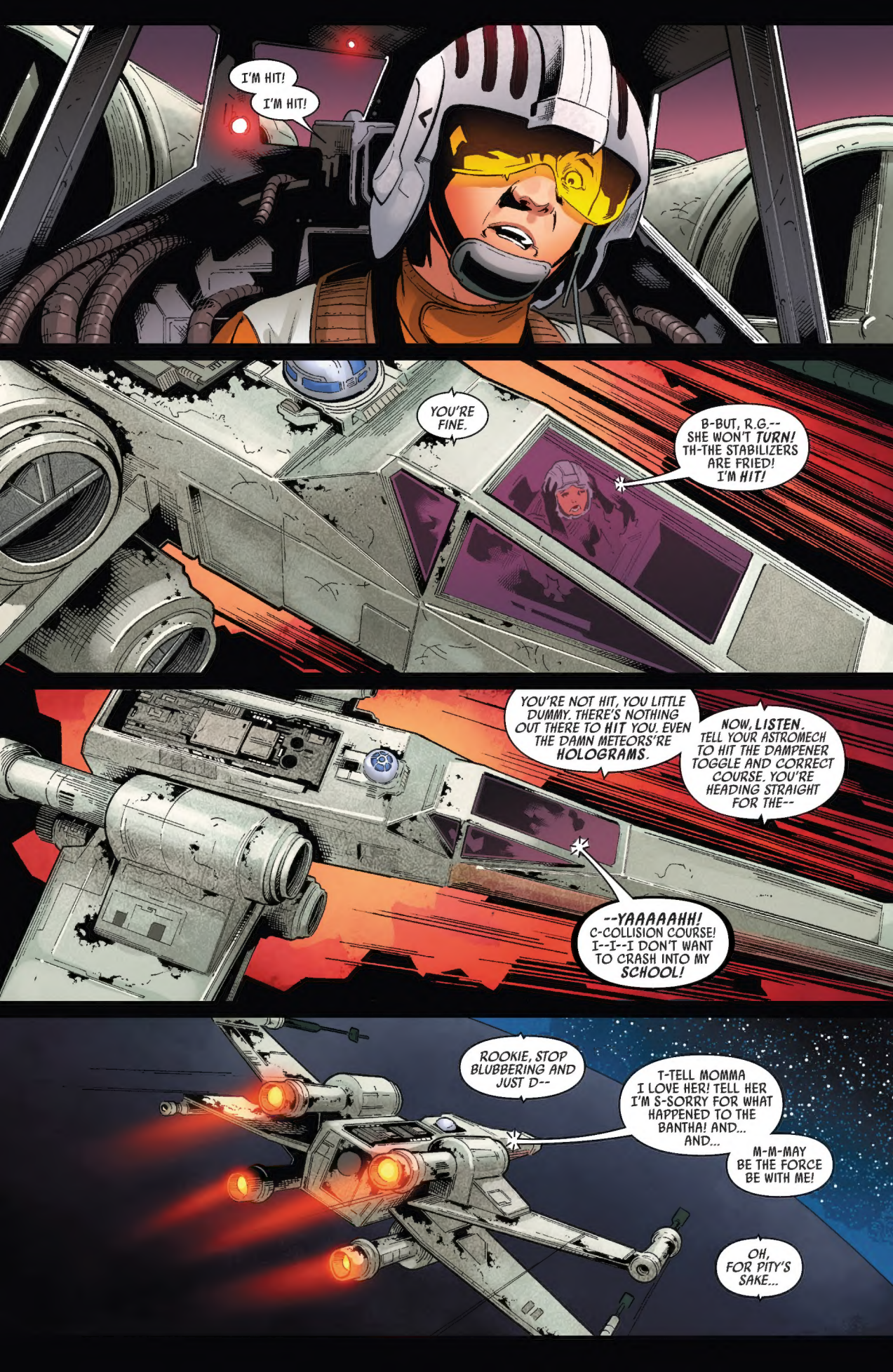

I'M HIT!
I'M HIT!
YOU'RE FINE.
B-BUT, R.G.-- SHE WON'T TURN! TH-THE STABILIZERS ARE FRIED! I'M HIT!
YOU'RE NOT HIT, YOU LITTLE DUMMY. THERE'S NOTHING OUT THERE TO HIT YOU. EVEN THE DAMN METEORS'RE HOLOGRAMS.
NOW, LISTEN. TELL YOUR ASTROMECH TO HIT THE DAMPENER TOGGLE AND CORRECT COURSE. YOU'RE HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THE--
--YAAAAAHH! C-COLLISION COURSE! I--I--I DON'T WANT TO CRASH INTO MY SCHOOL!
ROOKIE, STOP BLUBBERING AND JUST D--
T-TELL MOMMA I LOVE HER! TELL HER I'M S-SORRY FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BANTHA! AND... AND...
M-M-MAY BE THE FORCE BE WITH ME!
OH, FOR PITY'S SAKE...

FLIGHT CONTROL--THIS IS THE ROTATION GENERAL.
NOW TAKING REMOTE CONTROL OF TRAINING CRAFT X-322 VIA ASTROMECH Y6-TO.
ROJ THAT, R.G.
ROOKIE ASSESSMENT NOTE: D-MINUS--SEE ME.
AND SOMEONE CHECK IN WITH THE MEDBAY--SEE IF THEY'VE GOT ANY BACKBONES TO SPARE.
=SOB=
UH, R.G.? HOW MANY X-WINGS ARE YOU CURRENTLY FLYING, MA'AM?
JUST OUT OF INTEREST.
MMF-- I DON'T KNOW, SIX OR SEVEN? DOES IT MATTER?
NO, MA'AM. JUST, AH... GOT SOME NEW RECRUITS WAITING TO SEE YOU OUT HERE.

I'LL TELL 'EM YOU'RE BUSY.
HOW DID YOU FIND US?
OOOH, GOOD QUESTION! HOW DID WE FIND THIS EIGHT-GAJILLION-TON TOTALLY UNCLOAKED SUPERMASSIVE SPACE HOOP THAT BLAZES WITH THE RELENTLESS COMMS CHATTER OF A THOUSAND TERRIFIED TEENAGERS?
IGNORE HER. I SPEAK FOR THIS TEAM.
TRUTH IS--WE HEARD RUMORS. A REBEL FLIGHT SCHOOL IN AN OLD TRADE FEDERATION LUCREHULK. WANTED TO SEE FOR OURSELVES.
WE FOUND JUMP SIGNATURES IN WAT TAMBOR'S FILES. LET US TRACK YOU DOWN, EASY.
GUESS THE OLD FROG DIDN'T TRUST HIS ALLIES.

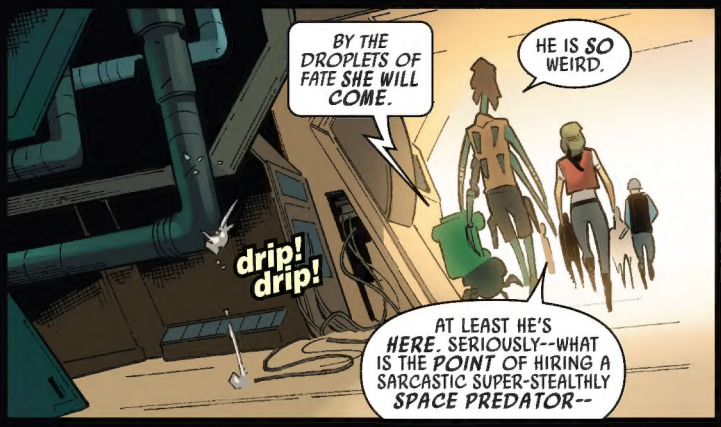
ALL THAT TROUBLE, JUST TO REACH US. CHARACTERISTIC, I GUESS. WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE, POSLA.
MILVAYNE'S MOST CELEBRATED LAWMAN--GONE ROGUE WHEN THE IMPERIALS WOULDN'T LET YOU DO YOUR JOB...

YOU'RE EXACTLY THE SORT WE NEED.
WAIT, WH--
NOW, SOME OF YOUR ASSOCIATES HERE MIGHT NEED A CHARACTER REFERENCE OR TWO, AND OF COURSE THE ROTATION GENERAL GETS THE FINAL SAY...

...BUT, LOOK--SHE'LL BE IN THE CONTROL CORE FOR A WHILE YET.
IT WOULD BE AN HONOR TO SHOW YOU AROUND BEFORE THE RECRUITMENT ASSESSMENT BEGINS.
RECR--?
SAY YES, IDIOT.

WHERE'S OMBRA?
THE SNEERWOLF? HOW SHOULD I KNOW? SHE DID THAT CREEPY MELT-INTO-THE-SHADOWS THING THE MINUTE WE DOCKED.
NOT WOLF.

WHAT?
NOT WOLF BUT WORN A SHEEP A CREEP IN DEFEL DUDS SUCH PRETTY PROBABILITIES BUT SHE WILL COME OH YES.
ZZZp!


BY THE DROPLETS OF FATE SHE WILL COME.
HE IS SO WEIRD.
drip! drip!
AT LEAST HE'S HERE. SERIOUSLY--WHAT IS THE POINT OF HIRING A SARCASTIC SUPER-STEALTHLY SPACE PREDATOR--

"--IF SHE CAN'T EVEN WORK WITH THE TEAM?"
...AND DOWN THERE'S THE DROID CONTROL ARRAY.
FEDERATION USED 'EM TO CONTROL THEIR ARMIES, Y'KNOW? AT LEAST, UP 'TIL SOMEONE EXPLAINED THE TERM "INSANE TACTICAL LIABILITY."
WE'LL HAVE TO IMPROVISE.
MOST OF THE GENERALS WE GET ON ROTATION JUST IGNORE IT, BUT THIS NEW ONE'S BEEN USING IT ON THE ASTROMECHS. HELPING HAND FOR THE ROOKIES.
ONLY--SHE HATES TO BE INTERRUPTED, SO LET'S KEEP MOV--
HEY! FLUFTO!
UGH--THAT DAMN TOOKA. WHAT SORT OF DUMB SPACER KEEPS A PET NATURALLY ATTRACTED TO HIGH-ENERGY FIELDS, I ASK YOU?
WAIT!

STOP-- YOU'RE NOT AUTHORIZED TO GO IN TH--
DON'T WORRY! I'LL GET HIM!
BUT--
OH, WOW-- OFFICER, I'M DETECTING SOME TOP-GRADE AUG HERE. IS...IS THIS LAZLIK'S WORK?
OR--SURELY NOT--THE ZEPH QUINTUPLETS? I HAVE TO KNOW.
W-WELL, THAT'S--
ALERT! ALERT! SECURITY BREACH!
WEAPONS DETECTED IN SECURE AREA! ALERT!
WEAPONS?! B-BUT WE SEARCHED YOU ALL! WE CONFISCATED YOUR BLASTERS!
IT'S FINE! TEENSY BIT OF BIO EXPLOSIVE IN THE TOOKA'S GENES, ALL TOTALLY UNDER CONTR--

I'LL DECIDE WHAT'S UNDER CONTROL.
F...FLUFTO...?
FOLKS, TH-THIS IS GENERAL HERA SYNDULLA.
JUST SOME NEW VOLUNTEERS, MA'AM. S-STANDARD TOUR. DIDN'T MEAN TO BOTHER YOU.

WE'RE NOT... ACTUALLY... VOLUNTEERS.
WE NEVER SAID SO.
WHAT? BUT...IT'S THE REBELLION! ALL THE GOOD GUYS WANT TO JOIN!
YOU DIDN'T EVEN SAY PLEASE.

PLEASE?
WHY DID YOU COME?
WE HAVE A PROPOSAL, MA'AM. MUTUAL BENEFIT.

...
THEY'RE MERCS.
IN THE BRIG. NOW.

ALL RIGHT, SISTER SIX--WE'RE FOURTEEN DECKS UP. THINK YOU COULD TAKE THESE GUYS AND GET TO THE HANGAR BEFORE THEY BLOW OUR SHIP?
PIECE OF CAKE.

REST OF YOU WOULD ALL BE MINCED, OF COURSE. AND I'D PROBABLY BLEED OUT BEFORE I COULD TAKE OFF.
...LET'S DO IT.
=SIGH= STAND DOWN, PEOPLE.

DRIP.
DRIP.
DRIP.

Later...
CLNK
HUH. I WAS WONDERING WHEN YOU'D SHOW UP.
HEY--WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR CLAWS? WEREN'T THEY BIGGER THAN TH...
...
OHHHH CRAP.
I CAN HEAR THE VILLAINESS NEXT DOOR MUTTERING. I BET SHE SCHEMES IN HER SLEEP.
DOCTOR? DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?
TELL HIM IT'S NOTHING.

YOU...YOU SKINNED H--
IS THAT DROID ON?
NO.

SOON SOON THE BURSTING DAM THE WATER WILL WASH US AWAY--
OKAY-- YES--BUT HE'S MAD.
YOU LITERALLY KILLED HER AND SKINNED HER AND... AND...

I TERMINATED A MURDERER AND CAPITALIZED ON A TACTICAL RESOURCE. I DID MY DUTY.
AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE LIKE THIS, TOLVAN I MEAN--LOOK, I'M ALL FOR DISCIPLINE. HOT UNIFORMS, ETC. BETTER THAN THE ALTERNATIVE, RIGHT? BUT... C'MON.

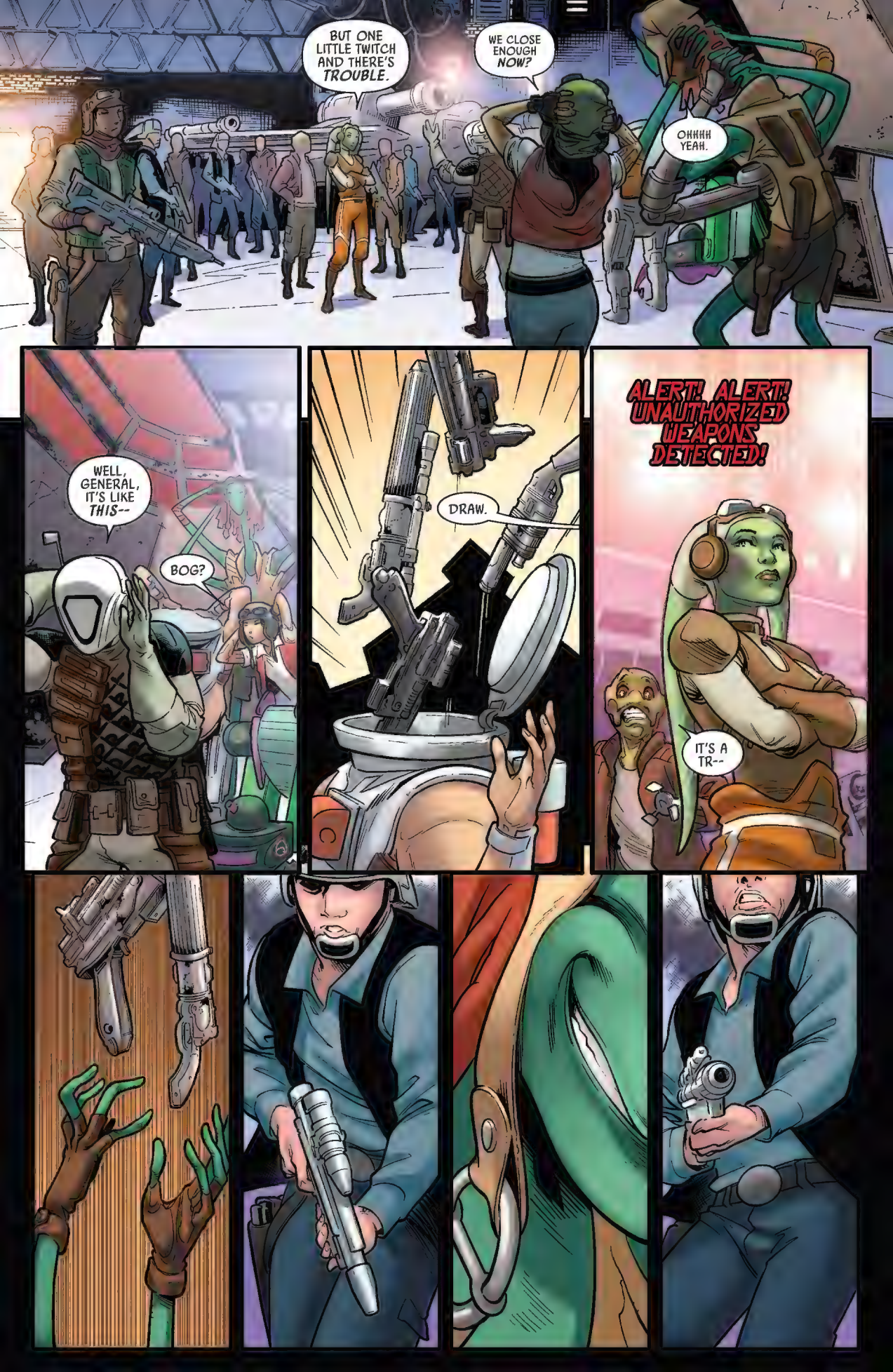
YOU'RE NOT BLACK-AND-WHITE RIGHT THROUGH. YOU ALREADY KINDA-- FRATERNIZED A BIT. AND I AM TOTALLY ON BOARD WITH REPEAT FRATERNIZATION, FYI.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THEIR STOOGE, SIR.

MY MENTOR--INSPECTOR THANOTH--HE ALWAYS SAID FOR SOME PEOPLE, ORDER IS JUST CONTROL. POWER, PLAIN AND SIMPLE.
OTHERS CRAVE ORDER SIMPLY FOR THE CHANCE TO BREAK IT. ADVENTURERS. CRIMINALS. HYPOCRITES WITH A SECRET CRUSH ON THE JACKBOOT.
BUSTED.
BUT WHEN HE CONSIDERED THE MOST STRIDENT DISCIPLINARIANS OF ALL, HE PROPOSED A THEORY--

THEY CRAVE ORDER BECAUSE THEY HAVE NONE IN THEIR HEARTS.
AND IT SCARES THEM.
SOMETIMES A CAREER IS THE ONLY WAY TO GAUGE THE SUCCESS OF ONE'S SELF CONTROL.
THERE ARE OTHER CAREERS, SIR.
...
TELL ME YOUR NAME, YOUR MISSION, AND WHY YOUR RECORDS HAVE BEEN DELETED BY LORD VADER.
OR I WILL SHOOT YOU IN THE FACE.

CRITICAL PUDDLEZAP CONTACT IN 5...4...3...
HM. BLOWN COUPLING IN SECTOR TWO, SIR. MIGHT CAUSE A LITTLE SURGE IN THE LOWER DECKS-- NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
WZZT--!
KZZZT!
WH...WH...
IT SMELLS LIKE REFRACTION IN HERE.
...
HELP ME GET HER BACK IN THE DUCT, YOU TOTAL WEIRDO.
"ALL RIGHT. YOU HAVE MY ATTENTION."

YOU COULD HAVE ESCAPED YOUR CELLS, BUT YOU STAYED PUT. THAT BUYS YOU AN EXIT IN YOUR OWN SHIP INSTEAD OF THE AIRLOCK.
STILL--THIS IS A SCHOOL. YOU HAVE TEN SECONDS TO PERSUADE ME THERE'S NO TARGET PRACTICE TODAY.
WE ALREADY SAID. WE HAVE A PROPOSAL.
WHAT IF WE TOLD YOU WE HAVE A WAY INTO HIVEBASE-1?
THAT'S...THE R&D HUB OF THE TARKIN INITIATIVE. THEY SAY THE DATA CORE'S SO DENSE IT HAS ITS OWN GRAVITY.
I KNOW WHAT IT IS. FIVE SECONDS.
THINK WHAT THE REBELLION COULD DO WITH ALL THAT INFORMATION...
WE HAVE A PLAN. IT'S FOOLPROOF.
WE JUST... NEED A LITTLE HELP.
...
GUNS DOWN.
I'M LISTENING.


BUT ONE LITTLE TWITCH AND THERE'S TROUBLE.
WE CLOSE ENOUGH NOW?
OHHHH YEAH.
WELL, GENERAL, IT'S LIKE THIS--
BOG?
DRAW.
ALERT! ALERT! UNAUTHORIZED WEAPONS DETECTED!
IT'S A TR--

ONE LITTLE TWITCH.
=SIGH= NOT A SINGLE ERRANT BODY PART. STUN BLASTERS ARE ZERO FUN.
WHAT...THE... HELL...?
HELP ME GET HER ABOARD! THEY'LL HAVE BACKUP ON THE WAY.
IT'S BASICALLY A KIDNAPPING, DEAR. LEND A HAND, WOULD YOU?
YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS?
IN AS MUCH AS THEY USED MY NECK STUMP AS A WEAPONS CACHE?
WELL, YES. A BIT.
BETRAYER! LIAR!
I THOUGHT OUR PLAN WAS HONORABLE!
WE WANTED TO TELL YOU. IT'S JUST...YOU CAN BE A BIT...POMPOUS, DEAR...
AND YOU DO SO ENJOY BEING IN CHARGE. THE DOCTOR THOUGHT YOU'D BE HAPPIER THIS WAY.
YOU'RE ALL VILE! YOU'RE ALL FILTH! I QUIT!
RIGHTIO. ENJOY THE REINFORCEMENTS.
RETRACTING THE RAMP.
NRRRRRWAAIT!
I HATE YOU PEOPLE SO MUCH!

=AHEM=
GO AWAY.
I AM YOUR MASTER, YOU KNOW. AND YOU HAVE QUITE CLEARLY KILLED MY MUSCULAR CYBORG. A LITTLE TERRIFIED DEFERENCE WOULD SEEM APT.
GO AWAY, SIR.
OH, OH DEAR. MY POOR DOCTOR. PLEASE-- I MAY BE A VITUPERATIVE PSYCHOPATH, BUT--SOMETHING'S UPSET YOU, HASN'T IT?
I CAN TELL.
...
IS IT TO DO WITH MURDER? BECAUSE I HAPPEN TO F--
LEAVE ME ALONE, TRIP!
THERE ARE OTHER CAREERS.

In The Ducts Of The Rebel Base.
NNNNF.
?
SAY, I SEEM TO HAVE MISPLACED MY HOLO-COMMUNICATOR. BY ACCIDENT. ANYONE GOT A SPARE?
WHY? WHO'RE YOU TRICKING INTO BETRAYING THEIR HONOR NOW? YOU KNOW, I OUGHT T--
DO STOP SULKING, DEAR.
SHE MADE ME INTO A LIAR!
YOU DIDN'T TELL ANY LIES. THE PLAN IS TO GET ABOARD THE HIVEBASE AND IT IS FOOLPROOF. JUST A LITTLE MORE...COMPLEX THAN YOU THOUGHT.
ENCRYPTED COMMUNICATOR: THIS IS A RESTRICTED IMPERIAL CHANNEL. IDENTIFY YOURSELF AND STATE YOUR BUSINESS IMMEDIATELY.
OH, HEY. IS YOUR BOSS AROUND? HE HAS SOMETHING I NEED. AND-- WELL--

I WAS THINKING HE MIGHT LIKE TO *TRADE*.

DOCTOR APHRA
NEXT ISSUE:
A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away is a lot easier to get to than you think – and we want to hear from you! Write us at StarWars@Marvel.com if you want to make it onto a future letters page. Don't forget to mark the letter "OK TO PRINT."